

Office of Selectmen
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Webster Board of Selectmen's Meeting – March 30, 2009. This meeting was recessed from March 23, 2009

7:00 P.M. Roll Call – Present: Chairman Thomas Mullins, Selectman David Klumb and Selectman George Hashem

The Board signed a Veteran's Exemption and a Veteran's Total Disability Exemption for a resident presented by Administrative Assistant Judith Jones:

The Board signed two Timber Tax Levys and the MS 5 (Annual Town Financial Report) for Financial Administrator Wendy Pinkham.

Again a large number of citizens attended this meeting. Chairman Mullins advised that information regarding possible cuts to the budget had been requested of all Department Heads and the various Committee Chairman. He noted that not all requests have been returned and nothing has been completed at this time.

Again there were many questions, both pro and con, with some of the highlights below:

- Has the Police Department responded – yes, but not in the form requested by the Board.
- Lieutenant Mitchell addressed Chairman Mullins noting that at the last meeting he said that the numbers in the letter were those used for DRA reporting purposes. He went through the budget and cut \$30,000 from the budget (the original proposed budget of \$203,000 plus) to approximately \$173,000, yet when Chairman Mullins called him, he was given a beginning budget figure of around \$125; therefore Lieutenant Mitchell requested clarification as to what number the Police Department was to start with – the letter sent to Department Heads showed a total of \$126,630 for the Police Department and that is the starting point.
- What information has been received from the State – the Board has been advised that the Revenue Sharing; only one of three revenues is thought to be intact at this time.
- The Town can only spend what was appropriated at the Town Meeting; no spending without an appropriation.
- Capital Reserve Funds can only be used for their designated purpose and cannot be otherwise used.
- No contracted items voted at Town Meeting can be changed.
- The Town can only use those FEMA monies expected that are designated for "clean-up", the remaining money will go into the General Fund.
- How can a Special Town Meeting be held – Special Town Meetings not requiring the expenditure of money, i.e. Zoning Amendments, can be held with proper notice. Special Town Meetings requiring the expenditure of funds must be approved by the Court. This would require the Town to demonstrate an emergency situation (and require an immediate expenditure of the money).
- When the voters approved the cut of \$110,000 to Article 21, how was it determined not to come off the bottom line – it was once again explained how the MS 2 was configured (with the help of Town Counsel). Mrs. Pinkham explained that there were certain contractually line items in Article 21 that had to be excluded from any cuts, with the remaining line items figured using a formula.
- Is the Town open to more liability if the level of Police Coverage is not what has been customarily provided – unknown at this time.
- At what point will the changes be evident – all Departments are operating frugally at this time.
- Could the Revenue Sharing expected from the State be used to help fund the Police Department and not as a revenue – no.
- How much of the total budget could be affected by the cut – all fixed expenditures would be excluded.

There were many more pros and cons between the public and the Board i.e. whether the cuts were arbitrary, how they were applied, how the Board planned to manage the Department Head recommendations; etc.

The Board attempted to explain Municipal Budgeting. Chairman Mullins read excerpts from RSA 32:10 relative to Transfer of Appropriations to help clarify this issue. It was explained that permission to overspend the budget must be requested from DRA under RSA 32:11 Emergency Expenditures and Overexpenditures. This RSA also refers to "sudden or unexpected emergency..."

Further inquiries about a possible petition to the court continued. Selectman Klumb will look into the cost associated with this action. Selectman Hashem suggested asking Town Counsel for an opinion. Chairman Mullins advised that Local Government Legal Services could be asked for a verbal opinion, but noted that they would not provide any written opinion.

Chairman Mullins did not feel that any positive results would come from further discussion this evening. He advised that he is willing and will request a written opinion from Town Counsel. When questioned if this would be ready in time for the next meeting, the Board was uncertain if it could be done in time for the next meeting scheduled for April 6, 2009 at 7:00 P.M.

8:10 P.M. Selectman Hashem made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved.

Thomas S. Mullins
BOS/jj

David E. Klumb

George K. Hashem